

MINUTES
Educational Opportunity Fund
Board of Directors Meeting
December 6, 2001

The EOF Board of Directors meeting was held at Burlington County College's High Technology Small Business Incubator Center, Mt. Laurel, New Jersey in compliance with the open Public Meetings Act. Dr. Sang Jin Kim, EOF Board Chairperson, presided.

Attendance

The Board members in attendance were: Dr. Al Arce, Mr. James Avery, Dr. Herbert Flamer, Mr. Ellsworth Havens, Dr. Sang Jin Kim, and Dr. William King. Ms. Michelle Softley - President of the New Jersey Educational Opportunity Fund Professional Association, and Dr. Dennis Levy - Director of Grants & Scholarships - HESAA, also attended the meeting. Commission on Higher Education staff in attendance were: Dr. Glenn Lang, Ms. Audrey Bennerson, Ms. Janis Flanagan and Ms. Isabel Dawson (graduate assistant). Dr. Robert Messina, Jr. - President of Burlington County College, Ms. Penny McPherson-Barnes - EOF Director at Burlington County College, and several institutional EOF directors were also in attendance.

Dr. Robert Messina, President of Burlington County College, welcomed everyone to the institution and thanked Ms. Penny McPherson-Barnes for arranging the meeting. Dr. Messina informed the Board that Burlington County is the largest county in the State of New Jersey; 440,000 people reside in the county and the Mount Laurel area is considered the "high tech" corridor, with 34,000 high tech jobs. The college enrolls 6,728 students and anticipates growing to serve 7,000 by fall 2002. Burlington County College experienced the largest increase in their enrollment last fall and spring 2002 semester enrollment is 28% ahead of the spring 2001 enrollment. The College is building an \$18.6 million telecommunications, business and science center that is scheduled to open right after the new year and invited the Board to come back and visit after it is opened.

Dr. Messina also added that Burlington County College's EOF program is held in high regard. The co-valedictorian at the June 2001 commencement exercises was an EOF student who earned a 4.0 average and is currently enrolled at Rowan University where she continues to earn straight A's. All of Burlington's EOF students do very well but without the EOF program and the services provided by the staff, many would not be able to complete their degree.

Approval of the Minutes of September 20, 2001

Dr. King made a motion to approve the minutes of the September 20, 2001 meeting of the Board. Mr. Avery seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

Dr. Lang informed the Board that once the minutes of their meeting are approved, they are now posted on the EOF website.

Resolution 8:02 In Memory of Dr. Lambert Blunt Jackson

In October, the sudden passing of our dear colleague and friend, Dr. Lambert Jackson, shocked the EOF statewide family.

Dr. Jackson served as the EOF Director at Rutgers University Camden College of Arts & Sciences for 17 years. As a small token of the Board's appreciation for Dr. Jackson's dedication to the program, a resolution commemorating his memory was read.

Dr. Flamer offered a motion to accept Resolution 8:02, which was seconded by Dr. King and unanimously approved. The resolution was presented to Dr. Jackson's wife and to Mr. Leland Butler, the interim director of the Rutgers Camden EOF Program representing Lambert's staff.

Mrs. Jackson indicated that Lambert would have been pleased to learn that there were so many people in the State who recognized what he was trying to provide to students. He dedicated 25 years of his life to ensuring that the students earned their degrees and had an opportunity to experience success. She also thanked the Board on behalf of her family for the recognition of her husband's work.

Resolution 9:02 Approval of Proposal to Notice Amendments in the New Jersey Register to EOF Administrative Procedures and Policies Regarding Academic Progress & Academic Probation Dismissal of EOF Students

Dr. Kim introduced Resolution 9:02 which seeks the Board's approval to publish in the New Jersey Register a proposal to notice amendments to sections N.J.A.C. 9A:11-6.12 "academic probation" and N.J.A.C. 9A:11-6.13(a) "academic probation/dismissal of EOF students" of the EOF regulations. He asked Dr. Lang to elaborate on the two amendments.

Dr. Lang indicated that both amendments are technical changes in the regulations and that the language in each of the regulations will not change. The EOF Central Office staff discovered in a review of the regulations that some of the numbers were not in the correct sequence. To correct the number sequences, the Fund is required to complete the noticing and regulation adoption process. This proposal will correct those errors.

Dr. King made a motion to approve Resolution 9:02. A second of the motion was offered by Dr. Flamer and the resolution was unanimously approved.

Resolution 10:02 Approval of Advanced Funding for Summer 2002

Dr. Lang indicated that normally the Board first considers summer funding at the March meeting; however, this meeting presented an opportune time since the staff has completed processing fall student grant payments and has a sense of the total amount of

money available to the program. As background information, Dr. Lang explained that some years ago the Fund lost its general carry-forward ability which the Governor's office later replaced with a one million dollar increase in the budget to front-fund the summer program. For years, EOF had difficulties with the summer program because it started in one fiscal year and ended in the next fiscal year. The program normally had to wait until July 1, the beginning of the new fiscal year, before programs were allocated funds. Summer school starts in May and/or June on most campuses, but the Board was unable to promise funds until July. With the loss of the general carry-forward the program lost some flexibility, but gained greater flexibility by having money available to fund programs in the current fiscal year, making it possible to register students for summer school in April and pay their bills.

The amount of the funds available to front-fund summer programs in 2002 has grown due to refunds that have been recouped from institutions that did not use all of their academic year student grant allocation for last spring semester. (A reduction in student enrollment during the spring semester is normal, because enrollment drops by 3-4 %). Currently, there is \$1.9 million set aside to front-fund the summer program and Resolution 10:02 asks the Board's approval to officially make those allocations to the institutions now. As the fall semester draws to a conclusion many programs already know that they will have students who must attend summer school. This action will make it possible for them to set-up the summer program accounts with their institutions now and also gives them a better sense of the resources available to support the initial students they are admitting now.

Dr. Flamer asked if this advanced funding was primarily for renewal students rather than freshmen. Dr. Lang responded that at this point in time the first priority would be renewals, but if directors have a summer program where the freshmen come in before the end of the fiscal year the funds could go to support freshmen as well. Dr. Flamer also mentioned the Board's concern regarding institutions having to reduce the length of their summer programs below six weeks and inquired if this advanced funding would help programs address this problem. Dr. Lang stated that this advanced funding represents 24% of what the institutions were actually allocated last year, so this advanced funding is not a budget increase - it simply gives the institutions assured funding earlier in the process.

Dr. King made a motion to approve Resolution 10:02, which was seconded by Dr. Arce.

Ms. Softley shared with the Board that at most institutions the first session of summer classes begins a week prior to Memorial Day or a week after it and without the good graces of their institutions most programs would not be able to fund the renewal students to take classes during that first session. More specifically, at Passaic County Community College the first summer session begins on May 25 and these funds will make it possible to tell students well in advance that they need to attend summer school and the program will be able to help them with the cost.

Dr. Kim called for a vote and the motion carried unanimously.

INFORMATION ITEMS

INROADS UPDATE

Dr. Lang indicated that the EOF central office staff held two meetings with the representatives from INROADS. The first meeting was held with the program manager from the central New Jersey office, Ms. Pamela Watson. After sharing our ideas at the initial meeting, Ms. Watson suggested that we invite representatives from the northern New Jersey and southern New Jersey/Philadelphia INROADS offices to meet with us. Dr. Lang also suggested that an invitation should be extended to Ms. Michelle Softley, President of NJEOFPA, to further enhance our discussions.

The discussions focused on the type of services INROADS offers, the type of career services our programs currently provide (assessed with a survey that was shared with INROADS staff), the kinds of services INROADS can provide that differ from what students currently receive, and INROADS' capacity to provide these services. The discussions were fruitful and Ms. Softley has agreed to share the discussion with the executive board of NJEOFPA, and follow-up with INROADS by providing more details on how to connect with individual programs. The Board materials include a narrative of what has been discussed with INROADS, and the results of the survey. The materials also include a document we recently received from INROADS, which outlines the partnership and process from their perspective. INROADS currently interacts with a number of EOF programs including recruiting students for internships. In addition to this activity, we reached a mutual conclusion that INROADS could also assist with staff development/training (i.e. Counselor Training Institute) by working with counselors to provide information on how to do a better job of career development and assessments, providing general workshops for EOF students, presentations and assistance with student leadership day and the career diversity fair. The overall intent is that when INROADS comes in contact with our programs/staff they will be on campus to do more than just recruit students, but to provide a service. The workshops that they provide would not be limited to the students who meet the recruitment criteria, but to all of the students in the program. This arrangement will also help our programs, because they often (particularly in the summer) hire consultants to do similar workshops for them whereas there would be no charge to campus programs from INROADS to provide these services. On the other hand, INROADS will have access to a much larger population of EOF students for their recruitment efforts. The entire arrangement will be mutually beneficial and we look forward to their participation in our events and activities going into the spring semester.

Dr. Kim asked how INROADS selects the students who participate in their internship program. Dr. Lang explained that the selection of students to participate in an internship is a local process. Each INROADS affiliate would go to a particular campus to recruit and, based on the needs identified by their corporate clients, would inform the EOF campus staff that they are looking to recruit students with backgrounds in a specific area. One of the requirements all of their corporate clients currently request is a student with a cumulative grade point average of 3.00. One of the workshops INROADS indicated

would be beneficial to our students deals with taking a long-term look at your GPA and how to achieve a cumulative "B". This workshops addresses academic planning and self-management and would help students who don't currently have a CGPA of "B" but would like to pursue an internship work toward that goal.

Dr. King indicated that one of the concerns he had when INROADS was introduced at the July board retreat was duplication of effort and further inquired if this arrangement will be a collaborative effort with no duplication. Dr. Lang said rather than duplication, he viewed INROADS work as reinforcement, as their area of expertise is working with the corporate/private sector and not many EOF counselors may be familiar with that area of the world of work. Dr. Arce stated that he sees a multitude of benefits, including the fact that EOF students will become mainstreamed much faster and if so, some of the corporations may provide support for graduate education.

However, Dr. Arce expressed concerns regarding the level of articulation between the southern New Jersey/Philadelphia INROADS corporate clients versus northern New Jersey INROADS affiliates and their level of aggressiveness with their corporate clients. Dr. Lang answered that he was unable to respond to that concern. Up to this point, except for the few EOF programs that INROADS works with directly, their main source of student contacts has been through the institutional career development offices. If their real interest is attracting first-generation, low-income, minority students you do not go to the career development office, which tend to be underutilized by EOF and other minority students on campus. The EOF director may be the point person to deliver those students.

Mr. Havens commented that the question regarding south vs. north Jersey corporate clients was raised with the INROADS staff on a number of occasions and received varying responses, but believes that is because each INROADS affiliate is truly an independent office. On the other hand, Mr. Havens stated that he was informed that the South Jersey/Philadelphia affiliate is a very active, aggressive office with lots of placements and have numerous corporations as clients that are physically located in New Jersey.

Ms. Ollievita Williams of Rowan University reported that INROADS has actively recruited students from her program for several years. Ms. Williams further stated that she has found the experience to be beneficial to the students and helpful with the placement of students after graduation. Corporations that have worked with INROADS have high regards for the organization and feel quite comfortable hiring students who have gone through INROADS training because they have an excellent reputation. She also added that Johnson & Johnson is one of the companies in south Jersey that she is familiar with as an INROADS client.

Dr. Kim stated that most of the colleges and universities have a CO-OP program that offers students' college credit as well as internships and inquired of Ms. Softley whether an EOF student would be able to receive college credit for an internship sponsored by INROADS. Ms. Softley indicated that at her institution (Passaic CCC) the CO-OP program does offer credit, but whether or not a student would be able to receive credit for

an INROADS sponsored internship is just one of the issues to be examined with the INROADS staff. Dr. Kim shared that he met the manager of the northern Jersey INROADS office in Newark who is very anxious to work with the EOF programs.

Dr. Lang reiterated a comment made by Mr. Havens regarding how INROADS operates that is very important. INROADS is not a big centralized program, but an umbrella program. Each affiliate is similar to an area franchise. The individuals in one office are not necessarily familiar or known to the individuals in other offices because they report to different group managers. In our meetings we also learned about their capacity to deliver. The three INROADS offices in New Jersey are comparable in staff size to many campus EOF programs. This means that we will be working with the Association to develop local or regional events as opposed to the INROADS staff visiting all 56-campus programs to do workshops.

Actions Taken at October 2001, HESAA Meeting

Mr. Avery serves as the EOF Board of Directors representative on the Higher Education Student Assistance Authority (HESAA) and he shared a summary of the actions taken by the Authority at their October 2001 meeting. These actions included approval of an interest rate swap to assure that funding for the New Jersey College Loans to Assist State Students (NJCLASS) would continue to be available through the end of the academic year. This action was required because NJCLASS is one of the most popular programs administered by HESAA and the volume of loans approved has significantly increased. The rate at which the Authority was approving loans (\$0.5 million a day) would have exhausted the current funds. The Authority also adopted a Board Budget Policy Statement for FY2003 to support New Jersey student financial aid programs. He also reported that the NJBEST program has grown significantly and the Authority has proposed regulatory amendments for public noticing which will enable the Authority to process applications more efficiently and decrease the documentation requirements for its customers while still meeting HESAA's responsibilities to bond holders.

EOF Executive Director's Report

Dr. Lang informed the Board that the CHE submitted its first transition document a few weeks ago to the governor-elect's staff. The questions centered around fiscal issues, what are the big issues that you will face during the next one to five years, and have you been audited. EOF is the only program that has been audited within the CHE during the last five years. Additionally, all state government hiring is frozen, as well as travel and equipment accounts, plans have to be submitted to reduce administrative accounts by five percent for the current fiscal year and plans for a two and a half percent recurring cut for the next fiscal years. Dr. Lang added that he is working with the CHE's director of budget and finance to develop the EOF plan, and the plans they have looked at will not endanger any personnel lines or the funds needed to support our HESAA operation. These cuts will probably adversely affect EOF's travel and equipment lines.

The Board members also learned that all of the students who were in "hold" status for academic year Article III student grant funds have been paid. There are also two identical EOF supplemental appropriation bills (one in each house) that are coming up for a hearing (Senate- December 13 and Assembly-December 20, 2001). At the Senate hearing on December 13th there is an opportunity for two people to testify and the directors are encouraged to bring as many students as possible to the hearing. A draft copy of the EOF brochure was shared with Dr. Kim and based on his suggestions we will be adding the names of all of the participating institutions, the Board members and the governor to the brochure, before it is printed.

EOF Board Chairman's Report

Dr. Kim reported to the Board members that he attended the Presidents' Council meeting on September 24, 2001 where he shared with the college presidents the FY2003 EOF budget request and asked for their support. The meeting was very productive and a pledge was made to continue to be supportive of each other's efforts for increased funding.

On October 24, 2001 Dr. Kim reported that he met with Acting Governor DiFrancesco's education policy advisor, Ms. Jackie Stevens, who was quite informative and helpful, but since it is a lame-duck administration he did not expect to receive any commitments. However, he did have an opportunity to speak with Governor-elect McGreevey last week who is very aware of the EOF program and Dr. Kim anticipates that we will have his full support. He also had an opportunity to speak with Assemblyman Joe Doria who continues to support the program.

Dr. Lang added that there is a higher education transition committee which consist of former Governor Kean, Dr. Susan Cole - President of Montclair State University, Reverend Howard - who is familiar with the EOF program and Assemblyman Joe Doria.

New Business

Dr. Kim presented proclamations from acting Governor Donald DiFrancesco to former EOF Board Chairpersons Mr. James Avery and Dr. Herbert Flamer for their service to the program. The highlights of Mr. Avery's proclamation include recognition of his years of service as chairperson of the EOF Board from 1997 through 1999; his successful shepherding of the Board's request for a steady source of funding to support EOF's summer programs, resulting in an increased appropriation of \$1 million in direct funding; as well as his service on the Higher Education Student Assistance Authority. The highlights of Dr. Flamer's proclamation include his years of service as chairperson of the EOF Board from 1994 through 1997 and from 1999 through 2000; the completion of the first comprehensive strategic plan for the statewide EOF program, "Opportunity for a New Millennium" during his term; his successful efforts to increase the EOF undergraduate student grant; and his support of expanding the pipeline to higher education by endorsing the Commission on Higher Education's GEAR UP state project.

Both Mr. Avery and Dr. Flamer thanked Dr. Kim and the members of the Board for this unexpected honor.

NJEOFPA Announcements

Ms. Softley thanked Dr. Kim for hosting the wonderful holiday party. The annual spring NJEOFPA conference is still tentatively scheduled to begin Sunday, April 7, 2002 at the Doubletree Club Suites Hotel in Somerset, New Jersey. The student day conference will be held Monday, April 8, 2002. Discussions are currently on going as to whether or not the senior awardees' reception will take place at the hotel's conference and exhibition center. One suggestion was to hold a plenary session preceding the reception at the exhibition center to eliminate the congestion problem and possible problems with having students walking back and forth between the hotel and exhibition center. Dr. Lang informed the Board that we have asked the INROADS staff if they would be available to do a workshop for all senior awardees around the topic of preparing to move on to the next chapter in your life.

Ms. Softley reiterated that there is a senate education committee hearing on December 13, 2001 and the imperative need to have as many students attend as possible. Ms. Softley and James Whitney, EOF student at Rutgers College, will be the individuals presenting testimony at the December 13, 2001 hearings. The hearing is scheduled for 10:00 a.m. in the Statehouse annex. The Assembly hearing is scheduled for December 20, 2001.

NJEOFPA now has a website. The address is www.njeofpa.org. Mr. Ed Marshall an EOF counselor at Atlantic Cape Community College, designed the website.

Adjournment

Ms. Penny McPherson-Barnes, EOF Director at Burlington County College, thanked the Board members and welcomed all of the Board members to stay for lunch and a tour of the business incubator center.

Dr. King offered a motion for adjournment, which was seconded by Dr. Flamer and unanimously approved. The meeting adjourned at 12:25 p.m.